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SIPDIS

DEPT FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PPD, NEA/P, INR/R/MR

LONDON FOR GOLDRICH  
PARIS FOR ZEYA  
USCENTCOM FOR PLUSH  
FOREIGN PRESS CENTER FOR ASILAS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [OIIP](#) [PREL](#) [SCUL](#) [MU](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: FOREIGN RELATIONS, BRUSSELS, IRAQ, AND  
THE SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL

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Model Behavior  
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[1](#)1. The government-owned Arabic-language daily "Oman" published an editorial on June 22 entitled "Distinguished Models Of Relations With Brothers And Friends":

"Three recent models typify Oman's brotherly and friendly foreign relations. The first model is the 14th Session of the Oman/UAE Supreme Joint Committee, which underscores the desire of both countries to deepen their relations. The second model is the effort to develop economic and commercial relations with Asian countries, as demonstrated by the visit of the Minister of National Economy to South Korea and Japan. The third model is Oman's participation in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in America's capital city, in which the Sultanate was given the chance to showcase its culture and civilization in front of a friendly country: the United States. All of these models enhance communication and dialogue."

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Hope Sprouts In Brussels  
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[1](#)2. "Oman" also ran an editorial on June 24 under the headline "The Brussels Meeting And The Future Of Iraq":

"The Brussels meeting was important not only because of the need for a joint effort to end the suffering in Iraq, but also because of the growing global awareness that the situation in Iraq has regional and international consequences. Stability is now the main concern of the Iraqi people, and stability is a joint responsibility of neighboring countries as well as the international community. The participants in the Brussels meeting should ensure that any resolutions are reliable and credible."

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Seeing Through Iraq  
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[1](#)3. "Al-Watan," a privately owned Arabic-language daily, carried an editorial on June 25 entitled "Transparency Is Needed To Resolve The Iraq Issue":

"The tragic results in Iraq are a natural outcome of wrong calculations from the very outset of the war. American enthusiasm for the military adventure in Iraq is fading, and the people largely do not believe the administration's proclamations that everything is 'under control.' Even American government officials now occasionally contradict one another when speaking about the situation in Iraq. What the United States needs now is to have a bit more transparency in their talk about democracy and reform, since it is clear that not all Iraqis have welcomed American troops as liberators."

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Bearing Any Burden  
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[1](#)4. On June 26, "Oman" published an editorial under the headline "Iraq, America And Decisive Changes":

"We note that the United States has started to refer to the many hardships in Iraq. Perhaps this is the result of two factors: first, many Democratic members of Congress have increased their criticism of the Bush administration, claiming that the U.S. is losing the war in Iraq. Second, the estimated cost of the war effort is \$3 billion per month, which is an unacceptable burden for the American economy and the American taxpayer."

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A Festive Atmosphere  
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[1](#)5. Also on June 26, "al-Watan" featured an editorial entitled "A

Festival For Redrawing The Picture":

"Arabs and Americans both complain that they are not understood by the other side, yet both claim that they have put forth a great effort to develop such understanding. Oman provided a good lesson for both sides when it participated in the internationally renowned Smithsonian Folklife Festival. By presenting the diversity of Oman's customs, costumes and heritage - which are all part of the broader Arab culture - the participants revealed an honest, excellent, and efficient path towards increasing the level of mutual understanding.... For political reasons, Arabs have always been portrayed negatively in the West, but Oman has now opened wide a door that should help Americans change their views about Arabs - an effort that is much appreciated."

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Don't Lecture Me  
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16. A political cartoon appeared in "al-Watan" on June 26 that showed a caricature of Secretary Rice declaring, "We do not like your elections." An Arab woman in an abaya stands nearby with her hands on her hips and an annoyed expression, saying, "Who asked for your opinion!?"

SNOWDEN